

PACIFIC FRUIT EXPRESS COMPANY

December News Letter

San Francisco, December 18, 1953

ALL P.F.E. EMPLOYEES:

P.F.E. Loading

	1953			1952		
	<u>PFE Cars</u>	<u>Foreign</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>PFE Cars</u>	<u>Foreign</u>	<u>Total</u>
November	26,436	2,355	28,791	27,075	4,107	31,182
Jan.-Nov.	342,450	45,968	388,418	340,122	47,878	388,000

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Car Situation:

As of December 1st, 13,149 empty reefers were on contract lines, by far the largest supply on line during this period of the year in history. Such an accumulation of idle cars is unsatisfactory since PFEs are remunerative only when in motion. Lighter perishable loading in the East has permitted but nominal use of PFEs in foreign line service. Giant and super-giant cars, on the other hand are in short supply and will continue so through December and January although some relief will be forthcoming with the receipt of 200 new supers now under construction. The first of the 100 new end bunker supers was released at Roseville on December 7th.

Crop Conditions - Southern Pacific Territory

Oregon: Movement of pears from storage in the Medford-Klamath Falls area is expected to be heavy first part of the month for Holiday consumption.

Northern and Central California: Storage grape movement is expected to be heavy the first part of the month for Holiday consumption. Winter vegetables continue slightly under normal but are expected to be heavy first part of month for Holiday trade. Citrus from Porterville District began latter part of November and is now moving in good volume.

Southern California: Lettuce from Salt River Valley has passed peak but with both Yuma and Imperial increasing daily movement should be slightly heavier than last year. Vegetable acreage has been reduced considerably under last year in the Valleys; however, shipments are expected to be as heavy.

West Coast of Mexico: Vegetable movement has been later than normal due to heavy rains and should be slightly under last year.

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Along Union Pacific -

Loading in Northwestern District will be on a normal seasonal basis consisting principally of apples and pears with some miscellaneous commodities including frozen foods. In Idaho potato loading is running lighter than usual due to the poor markets that have prevailed all season. All potatoes have been harvested and stored and shipments will no doubt continue light for some time. Onions are moving in fairly steady volume despite very low market prices; storages are full and growers may hold back until better markets develop. There should be a good turkey movement for the Christmas trade.

In Eastern District, Colorado potatoes are moving very slowly and probably will not pick up until market improves. The same is true of the Western Nebraska potato situation.

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Five of the ten largest cities in the United States are located in the territory of our Eastern General Agency headquartering in New York. These cities are -

New York	(1)
Philadelphia	(3)
Baltimore	(6)
Washington	(9)
Boston	(10)

A report dealing with New York City and its markets has been submitted by Mr. C. C. Rowland, Eastern General Agent, New York City, the first part of which is attached. It covers the development of perishable transportation and the New York produce industry. His report will be completed in January. Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington and Boston will be covered in later News Letters.

We will have available for distribution a print of the New York Harbor Terminals which you may find useful in visualizing operations in that area. If you desire a copy, shall be glad to furnish upon request.

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To date we have made a reduction in the number of accident cases involving loss of time; however, in checking through the personal injury cases, I find that too many have resulted in long periods of hospitalization - heavy loss of income, disrupting family life, and, in some cases, permanent disfigurement and death.

With the Holiday Season fast approaching let me ask each of you to renew your determination to exercise extreme care in the performance of your every day duties, practice safety, abide by the rules and instructions set down to make your job safe for you and your fellow workmen. Let our motto be, "It can be done safely."

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NEW YORK PRODUCE MARKET
(Part I)

Beginning in the second quarter of the 19th Century, new transportation facilities were opening up areas for produce which had never before been tapped. Water transportation from the North and West was made possible by the opening of the Erie Canal (1825), and newly created water routes to the agricultural districts of New Jersey provided additional fertile farm territory for the New York market. The development of the railroads (beginning in 1830, when the Baltimore & Ohio inaugurated its first 14-mile section between Baltimore and Ellicott Mills, Maryland) ushered in an era of gradual expansion of the areas from which produce could be obtained for metropolitan markets. In 1852 the New York Central Railroad linked New York to the middle west with a through route, and in 1869 the first rail link to the Pacific had been completed.

Traffic and safety signals still were extremely primitive, and fruits and vegetables traveled in four wheeled box cars, 18 feet long, with no insulation or refrigeration, and were subject to many delays and to rough handling. New inventions such as the automatic air brake and improved signalling devices gradually improved freight shipping conditions and added to speed and safety. However, it was the development of the refrigerated car that revolutionized produce distribution and permitted the opening of all parts of the United States to the New York produce market. The first shipment of produce under refrigeration was made in 1872.

In 1887 the first shipment of transcontinental deciduous fruit left Vacaville, California, and arrived at the Erie Terminal in Jersey City on June 28th. The fruit was sold at auction on the basis of samples trucked over to New York from the Jersey City Terminal. By 1890 an average of 7,000 packages of produce were sold at auction every day at the Pennsylvania Railroad piers. The railroad piers thus became the center of the wholesale business of the market, not only for rail unloads but also for primary produce receipts coming in by cart and later by truck. An active jobber's market developed along Washington Street in the vicinity of the piers.

Greater New York City is made up of five boroughs - Bronx, Brooklyn, Richmond, Queens, and Manhattan. It has been a law for many years that steam locomotives will not be permitted on Manhattan Island, therefore carriers operating on the Island use either Diesel or electric locomotives.

Auctions handling perishables are located at Pier 20 (Erie) and Pier 28 (PRR). Here most of the tree fruits are sold, reaching the piers by Car Floats holding from 10 to 16 cars each. In the past few years juice grapes have been sold at auction on the Erie at Monmouth Street, Jersey City.

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between B&O for 26th Street; New York Team track delivery; and PRR to destinations on Long Island.

The Pennsylvania Railroad, the Central Railroad of New Jersey, and the Erie, were first to serve the Produce Market directly. At the beginning produce was unloaded in New Jersey and shipped across the Hudson by boat; later when the rail lines moved to terminals opposite lower Manhattan, the freight cars were barged across the Hudson on car floats to piers which had been acquired by the railroads for the unloading of produce in Manhattan. As more produce was shipped by rail and by boat, additional docking and pier facilities were provided for private sale and display of produce, and the Auction Sales were established. These "Auctions" are just what the name implies - places where blocks of fruits or vegetables are sold to the highest bidder.

After 1920 the introduction and expansion of motor trucking created a difficult situation. Traffic congestion at the piers became so great that finally motor trucks were forbidden to enter, and were forced to make deliveries directly to the stores on Washington Street. In consequence the functional division between the wholesalers who bought in carloads, and the jobbers, became indistinct, and in some cases disappeared entirely. Jobbers who had not been equipped to handle railroad carlot unloads were now able to receive primary truckloads direct. At the same time, many wholesalers, to meet this competition, expanded their activities to jobbing transactions.

The problem of traffic congestion became acute in the Washington Street section of the market, and still is to this date. The constant increase in population and the expansion of transportation facilities so greatly increased its volume that congestion finally reached a point which hampered the efficient functioning of the Market. Horse-drawn carts and motor vehicles carrying produce from the piers to the stores, and those bringing fruits and vegetables from the farming regions, converge in Washington Street with the carts and trucks of New York retail merchants anxious to buy and carry off the day's produce. The narrow streets make it impossible for vehicles to back up with their tailboards against the loading and unloading points. Lengthwise parking, therefore, was required, with the result that at busy periods only a small proportion of the vehicles coming into the market can be accommodated. The resulting traffic jam has become so great that vehicles are forced to wait for hours to load and unload, or must park several blocks away and have produce brought to them by hand trucks. The delays thus caused are expensive, in time and extra handling of produce, and sometimes also in spoilage of perishable produce.

The greater portion of produce shipped by rail arrives in New Jersey where several railroads have extensive holding and classification yards. From there produce is moved on demand across the

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Hudson River on car floats to the Lower Manhattan Market piers. The cars are left on the floats while stevedores transfer the cargo by hand trucks to pier floors, where it is stacked until sold or called for. Trucks enter the piers during designated hours and remove the produce - either direct to the Washington Street stores or out of the market for distribution.

There are, on the west side of Manhattan, several team track yards, only one of which has a direct rail connection. All are supplied by car float from the New Jersey yards. Additional car float and team track facilities existing in the Bronx and in Brooklyn carry a minor portion of total receipts. (All railroads naturally have considerable additional freight facilities; we are concerned here only with those employed in carrying fruit and vegetables for the New York market.)

The New York Central Railroad is the only line with direct freight connections in Manhattan, where it operates team tracks in its 33rd Street yard. At the 60th Street yard in Manhattan and in Weehawken, New Jersey, (West Shore Railroad), it maintains float bridges which serve piers 16 and 17 in the Lower Manhattan Market as well as other points of unload in the metropolitan area. They also serve the Bronx Terminal Market, Bronx, N. Y. which is all private sidings leased by tenants of the market. Further, they have a team track at Westchester Avenue, Bronx, where most of the unloadings consist of meat, however, they do unload occasional cars of produce at this station.

The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad has terminal and team track facilities at Harlem River Station, Bronx, N. Y. Via the New York Connecting Railway, it joins the Long Island Railroad in Queens and in Brooklyn, where there are direct sidings to wholesale and chain store warehouses. The Long Island Railroad has terminals in Long Island City and in Brooklyn.

The Pennsylvania Railroad maintains produce terminal yards in Jersey City and Newark. Produce is held at Jersey City where it is classified and trans-shipped across the Hudson River via car floats to its piers 27, 28 and 29, in Lower Manhattan Market. Team track operations are carried on in Newark and in addition some produce is floated across the Hudson to team tracks at 37th Street in Manhattan.

In the Erie Railroad yards at Jersey City, the usual holding and classification operations are performed, and the produce is floated to its piers 20 and 21 in the Lower Manhattan Market.

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad brings its produce over the tracks of the Central of New Jersey Railroad to Jersey City yards, from which it is floated, after classification, to pier 22 in the Lower Manhattan Market. In certain instances, the Baltimore & Ohio

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Railroad floats produce to its Manhattan team tracks at 26th Street.

The Erie Railroad handles the greatest part of western produce and consequently its unloads are heaviest between May and November. The greater part of Pennsylvania Railroad produce shipments originate in Florida and along the Atlantic seaboard; this traffic is busiest during the winter months, although a peak occurs in June when Florida unloads are still heavy and coincide with peak receipts from middle Atlantic states. Its traffic drops sharply in July, August and September.

The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad handles a quantity of western produce, largely vegetables.

The greater portion of the NYC RR produce unloads occur at team tracks in its 33rd Street yard. A portion of the produce (chiefly onions), is destined for the Washington Street stores and is shipped via car float directly to the Lower Manhattan Market pier 17 as an accommodation to the produce merchants in the Washington Street market.

Team track operations are performed in Manhattan by the Pennsylvania Railroad, the New York Central, and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and in Jersey City at the tracks of the Erie Railroad at Pavonia Avenue, and at the tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Second Avenue and Henderson Street.

In New York team tracks provide the most economical method of handling produce, if delivery is made direct to the secondary purchaser. It saves considerable handling as compared with the complicated process of transferring produce from railroad cars to hand trucks, then to the pier floors and finally to purchasers' trucks. Team track operations are usually preferred by dealers who expect to sell produce in quantities smaller than a full carload; unloads can be spread over a period of days, while produce remains in iced cars. The team track method is used to a considerable extent for sales of produce consigned to large buyers outside the Lower Manhattan Market whose warehouses are convenient to the tracks. For the most part this is produce which is sold by grade as well as produce requiring special handling, which makes it unsuitable for unloads at piers: (watermelons).

Other metropolitan railroad yards handle varying quantities of produce traffic. The New York Central Railroad operates a yard at the Bronx Terminal Market and also maintains the Harlem River Yard at 130th Street in Manhattan; the Long Island and the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroads have terminals in Brooklyn, and the Lehigh Valley line has a terminal at Pier 66, North River. In New Jersey there are various terminal facilities in addition to the team tracks operated by the Erie and the Pennsylvania railroads.

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